

Research Statement for Peer Review of Creative Works for the HCA Cluster

Title of Creative Work:	Bernard
Creator (s):	Dr Ffion Murphy

Research Background

The research context includes lyric poetry and elegy. The subject of the work—Bernard—is someone widely known and appreciated in Australian literary circles, but his significance for the writer can only be expressed, finally, by specific images of transience, relationships, aging, and plenitude that do not reference his professional reputation.

Research Contribution

The work deals with loss, mourning and remembrance. It also contributes to discourse on a key figure in the teaching and appreciation of Australian literature, Bernard Hickey. Professor Hickey, with Anna Rutherford, established the study of Australian literature in Europe. He worked for several years at universities in Rome and then Venice, and, from 1990 to 2009, was Professor of New Literatures and English at the University of Salento in Lecce. He was notable for his extraordinary enthusiasm and vitality as an ambassador for Australian literary studies for more than thirty years.

Research Significance

Professor Hickey invited the author to speak with students at the University of Salento in Lecce in April 2007. When he died a few months later, she was invited to submit work to be considered for a memorial volume of *Le Simplegadi*, an international refereed journal on modern language and literature. “Bernard” was subsequently selected for publication and appeared in *Le Simplegadi* No. 5 October 2007. The poem was later selected for publication in a print volume of work on Australian literature, dedicated to Professor Hickey, which was published in July 2009.

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